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ABSTRACT

The Student National Education Association (Student NEA) has developed criteria for teacher preparation programs which it feels reinforce current standards, emphasize particular elements within the standards, or generate goals that require the attention or consideration of conditions viewed to be essential to students but not present in all existing programs. The association hopes that these criteria can be first disseminated for use as the established guidelines for state and local chapters of the Student NEA, next as a document for use by administrative/faculty/student units for teacher education on college campuses, and finally as accepted criteria to measure the student dimension by National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) evaluation teams. This publication presents guidelines and questions for standards in the areas of (1) knowledge/theory/practice, (2) human relations, (3) field experience, (4) parent-teacher relationship, (5) student input, (6) assessment, (7) resources, (8) professionalism, and (9) professional teacher input. (BD)

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ESSENTIAL CRITERIA FOR

TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Adopted by the Representative Assembly

of the Student National Education Association

Lincoln, Nebraska

February 1975

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EDUCATION & WELFARE
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PREFACE

The past decade in higher education has evidenced a growing participation and involvement by students in the policy-making levels that affect campus life and college programs. More assurance has also been expressed for students' rights through various eligibility criteria being established by the U.S. Office of Education and other state agencies.

Since its inception in 1957, the Student National Education Association has proclaimed prospective teachers as vital members of a college community and has provided an opportunity for teachers in training to express their views regarding the improvement of teacher education programs. Currently, the Student NEA is an associate member of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and participates directly in the application of standards and accreditation of teacher education at the national level.

Although each of the 22 NCATE standards for accreditation of teacher education programs at the basic level is of concern to the Student NEA, there are two specific standards that invite students to take direct responsibility for maintaining the quality of prepared programs:

> Standard 1.4 - Use of Guidelines Developed by National Learned Societies and Professional Associations.
> "In planning and developing curricula for teacher education the institution gives due consideration to guidelines for teacher preparation developed by National Learned Societies and Professional Associations."
>
> Standard 13.4 - Student Participation in Program Evaluation and Development.
> "The institution has represented student participation in the evaluation and development of its teacher education programs."

It must be assumed that the Student NEA is the only national organization with a special interest in the pre-service students in a variety of college curricula for the preparation of teachers, therefore, the Student NEA can best reflect the relevance and language of the student dimension.

It is important for the Student NEA to develop and maintain a set of criteria that reinforce current standards, emphasize particular elements within the standards, or generate goals that require the attention or consideration of conditions viewed to be essential to students but not present in all existing programs.

It is hoped that the Essential Criteria for Teacher Preparation Programs can be disseminated first for use as the established guidelines for state and local chapters of the Student NEA; next as a document for use by administrative/faculty/student units for teacher education on college campuses; and finally as the accepted criteria to measure the student dimension by NCATE evaluation teams. To these ends, every Student NEA leader should emphasize the need to understand the Essential Criteria as an important supplement to the national standards for the accreditation of teacher education.

It must be assumed that Standard 13.4 is a direct invitation to involve the student dimension in a way that will influence the development of teacher preparation programs offered by institutions. Both Essential Criteria and further long-term provisions need to be effected on college campuses to encourage formal student organizations, joint student-faculty groups, membership on faculty committees, and other channels for frequent input and assessment of preparing programs.

The Student National Education Association has now been recognized as an important professional voice, and it is hoped that these Essential Criteria will become fully understood and applied, in an effort to improve teacher preparation programs from the students' point of view.

KNOWLEDGE/THEORY/PRACTICE

STANDARD:

Knowledge of subject content, practical experiences, and familiarity with educational theories and methods reinforce each other throughout teacher preparation programs.

A. Knowledge of subject content -- a well-rounded background and proficiency in the subject -- is essential to the total teacher program.

B. Familiarity with educational theories and methods, including their strengths and weaknesses, needs to be an integrated part of teacher preparation.

C. Practical experiences are periods during which the student tests and reconstructs the theory and knowledge that she/he has gained and during which she/he further develops a personal teaching style.

GUIDELINES:

A. Seminars, conferences, and workshops in current, relevant instructional methods, learning theories, content area, general knowledge, and school-community relationships shall be combined with field experiences throughout the teacher preparation program.

B. Professors of education and liberal arts professors who teach a large percentage of prospective teachers shall be continually involved in the elementary and secondary schools of their areas, for example, by periodically teaching, tutoring, or counseling in elementary or secondary schools, to make the content of their courses and their teaching practices relevant to the contemporary school setting.

C. Above all, teacher preparation programs and the actual teaching shall be exemplars of the best possible educational practices.

QUESTIONS:

1. How are knowledge, theory, methods, and practice integrated throughout the teacher preparation program?

2. Are professors continually involved in teaching, tutoring, or counseling in the elementary and secondary schools?

3. How are the teacher preparation program and actual classroom teaching examples of the best educational practices?

For purposes of clarity, each of the following goals is presented separately. One should keep in mind, however, that any goal should not be implemented separately, but rather integrated into a balanced teacher preparation program as outlined in the Knowledge/Theory/Practice Goal.

HUMAN RELATIONS

STANDARD:

Human relations training is incorporated in teacher preparation programs.

GUIDELINES:

A. Teacher preparation programs shall offer a variety of experiences in --

   1. Sensitivity/interpersonal relations/group dynamics.
   2. Sexism.
   3. Ethnic cultures.

B. These experiences can be provided by --

   1. Specifically designed courses, workshops, and/or seminars in these areas.
   2. Integrating them within previously established programs.
   3. Observation of instructors exhibiting the necessary qualities and skills.

C. From these experiences, the student has the opportunity to learn --

   1. How her/his own attitudes and behavior affect those around her/him.
   2. To accept the learner as a person worthy of the teacher's time.
   3. Patient support of the learner regardless of race, sex, social class, speech patterns, etc.

4. To be fair and consistent in assignments, testing, interpersonal relations, etc.

QUESTIONS:

1. What experiences are provided in sensitivity/interpersonal relations?

2. What and how much exposure to the varied ethnic cultures is provided for the pre-professional in training?

3. How are these experiences integrated into the total program?

4. How are students observed and evaluated in demonstrating their competency to deal sensitively with children, peers, and faculty? Is it continual?

5. Do all instructors in teacher preparation programs demonstrate their competency to relate humanly to peers and students? In what manner are they observed and evaluated?

6. Does the atmosphere of the college campus exemplify good human relations?

FIELD EXPERIENCE

STANDARD:

Teacher preparation programs include continual and varied field experiences with an increased involvement in practicum situations each year, as an integral part of the total teacher preparation program.

GUIDELINES:

A. Programs shall include experiences in the following sequential order:

   1. Exploration with exposure to numerous teaching settings varying in location, size, culture, and grade levels.
   2. Direct contact with children as tutors, teacher aides, and/or social agency aides.
   3. Involvement in group instruction and administrative aspects of teaching.
   4. Student teaching.

B. Throughout these experiences, there shall be careful selection of cooperating teachers to provide the best possible experiences.

C. Throughout these experiences, there shall be continual in-service training for the students and cooperating teachers, so that both are aware of the objectives, expectations, and benefits of the experience program.

D. As the experience is a practicum of what is learned in the college classroom, academic credit given for the experience shall be equal to that given for classroom instruction.

E. The cooperating teacher and student shall both be involved in planning the experience.

F. A student shall be able to enter the sequence at any time or phase based on her/his experiences.

QUESTIONS:

1. Are students involved in varied types of field experiences, as outlined in Guideline A?

2. To what extent are students allowed to participate in their experiences?

3. What types of in-service programs are offered to supplement the experiences?

4. Do the cooperating teacher and student participate in the in-service programs?

5. Is the cooperating teacher helpful to the student throughout the experience? Do the student and cooperating teacher both plan the experience? Does the cooperating teacher provide teaching methods, constructive criticism, and teaching aides and materials? To what extent?

6. Do the local school systems and university coordinate their efforts to identify and include classroom teachers in the field experience program.

PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP

STANDARD:

Teacher preparation programs provide prospective teachers with techniques and skills to engender positive parent-teacher relationships which will maximize the education of the child in school as well as out of school.

GUIDELINES:

Seminars, community activities, conferences, and/or workshops that will facilitate positive parent-teacher relationships shall be provided in teacher preparation programs. The experiences shall promote the sharing of concerns for education and develop avenues for closer cooperation and involvement of parents in the school.

QUESTIONS:

1. What evidence is there to show that prospective teachers have opportunities through seminars, conferences, community activities, and/or workshops to develop techniques and skills in creating positive parent-teacher relationships?

2. What evidence is there to demonstrate that prospective teachers participate with parents and teachers in opportunities to share concerns for education and to develop avenues for closer cooperation and involvement in the schools?

3. What evidence is there to demonstrate that prospective teachers are encouraged and assisted during their field experiences to put into practice methods to enhance school-community relationships?

STUDENT INPUT

STANDARD:

Student and recent graduate representatives with voting rights are on all committees involved with the planning, monitoring, and assessment of the teacher preparation program.

GUIDELINES:

A. A committee of students in each phase of the teacher preparation program, including graduates from the program within the past two years, all elected by their peers, function as a means to --

1. Evaluate the teacher preparation program.
2. Evaluate the faculty.
3. Seek the views of other students.
4. Recommend students to serve on all teacher preparation committees.
5. Make recommendations to the joint student-faculty policy making bodies.

B. This committee shall establish an ongoing means of pooling data concerning --

1. What classroom teachers are doing in their classrooms by way of innovations in education.
2. What school administrators from different school systems are involved with in terms of new curriculum change.
3. What other groups (i.e., educators, teacher organizations, State Boards of Education) involved in teacher preparation are developing.

QUESTIONS:

1. How are students and recent graduates being involved in planning for changes in curriculum?

2. How is their opinion being heard by the administration on issues of evaluating the teacher education program?

3. Is there a current means of allowing the students to evaluate their professors and are these evaluations used by the faculty in improving their teaching?

4. When and how is student and recent graduate opinion sought and used as criterion for crucial curricular and faculty evaluation before final adoption of said curriculum and faculty member? How often is this done?

5. What assurances does the student have against intimidation and harrassment as a result of participation in committee work?

ASSESSMENT

STANDARD:

The educative process of a teacher candidate includes a periodic self-evaluative instrument, continuous advisement by faculty, evaluation by peers, and counsel and evaluation by a full-time professional or "master" teacher.

GUIDELINES:

A. A series of evaluations shall be developed by students, faculty, and classroom teachers for purposes of creating checkpoints along the course of a teacher candidate's program.

B. The evaluations shall serve to identify strengths, weaknesses, or needs so that constructive alterations can be made in the style and/or manner of teaching. They shall serve as a means for the teacher candidate to review her/his qualifications and commitment to teaching.

C. The evaluative criteria shall be well-defined, valid, and objective.

QUESTIONS:

1. Does the student have any way of finding out that teaching is for her/him before the senior year? How?

2. Does the student have any way of discovering weaknesses or deficiencies without penalizing her/his grades? How?

3. How does the student-adviser relationship offer a means for the student to find out more about her/himself and have the opportunity to examine possible changes or alternatives?

4. What means does the student have of testing her/his potentials as a teacher before student teaching?

5. Are the evaluative criteria well-defined, valid, and objective?

6. How are those involved in the assessment procedure, particularly the student, made aware of the evaluative criteria?

RESOURCES

STANDARD:

Teacher preparation programs demonstrate in their courses practical ideas for the utilization of instructional media, field experiences, and other learning resources in and outside the community aside from the teacher and/or school facilities.

GUIDELINES:

A. The courses' objectives include --

1. Training in skills on the use and development of audiovisual materials and equipment.
2. How one could involve community personnel in the classroom.
3. How one could involve sites in the community as learning centers.
4. How to locate suitable free and commercial instructional materials.

B. The courses shall provide practical experience in planning and teaching lessons using the above skills.

QUESTIONS:

1. Are faculty members capable of teaching such skills within their own area of teaching?

2. Do teacher candidates demonstrate use of these resources within the teaching situation?

3. What experiences are provided for the student to learn these skills if they are not taught in class?

4. What kinds of collection (i.e., free instructional materials) already exist for the teacher candidate to explore and begin to build her/his own resource materials?

PROFESSIONALISM

STANDARD:

The teacher preparation program include instruction in professional rights and responsibilities.

GUIDELINES:

Students shall be provided experiences with, and knowledge of --

1. Contracts.
2. Negotiations and bargaining rights.
3. Political action and legislation.
4. Professional organizations.
5. State, regional, and national accreditation and certification policies and practices.
6. Legal rights and responsibilities of the classroom teacher.
7. Code of Ethics.
8. Tenure.

QUESTIONS:

1. What experiences are provided for the student with local, state, and national pre-professional and professional organizations (i.e., Student NEA)?

2. How are students exposed to these areas of professional knowledge?

3. Is the student given the opportunity to meet and interact with representatives from professional organizations?

PROFESSIONAL TEACHER INPUT

STANDARD:

Practicing teachers are integrally involved in the training of new practitioners and have part in designing the content of teacher preparation programs.

GUIDELINES:

A. Practicing classroom teachers shall serve as consultants in teacher preparation courses to ensure that theories and methods techniques are feasible, practical, and workable in the classroom.

B. Supervising teachers who are trained, experienced master teachers shall be provided release time and/or compensation for interaction with the pre-professional.

C. Colleges and universities shall maintain, integrate, and coordinate efforts in continual dialogue with local teachers and school groups as a critical source of practical proposals for their classroom instruction.

QUESTIONS:

1. Are classroom teachers utilized as resource persons in the university classroom?

2. How are supervising teachers compensated for their services?

3. Do the local school systems and university coordinate their efforts to identify and include classroom teachers in their teacher preparation program?